



HIKING - FOREST SERVICE - ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NATIONAL FOREST – San Juan RANGER DISTRICT - Columbine
Updated: June, 2003

Lime Mesa Trail #676

Length: 7.7 mi / 12.4 km

Use: Moderate

Difficulty: Difficult

USGS Map (s):

Lemon Reservoir, Mountain View Crest,
Columbine Pass.

Starting Elevation: 11,500'

End of Missionary Ridge Road.

Ending Elevation: 12,600' at overview,
11,900' at Ruby Lake, 11,579' at Emerald Lake.

Access:

Take East Animas Road (CR #250) from Durango to FDR #682 (Missionary Ridge Road). Follow the road for 17.5 miles to the Henderson Lake turn-off. Drive FDR #081 for 5 miles to its end (FDR #081 is 4WD for the last 2 miles). Take the City Reservoir trail for ¼ mile to a large meadow where the Lime Mesa Trail branches to the north as the City Reservoir Trail heads southeast. **NOTE: As of summer 2003, the Missionary Ridge Road is closed until at least 2004. An alternate route to access Lime Mesa Trail is to start at Transfer Park at Burnt Timber Trailhead. Please see the Trail Sheet for the Burnt Timber Trail.**

Attractions & Considerations:

The trail begins in a meadow, winds along an old four-wheel-drive road, and crosses through timber for 2 miles before heading down to Dollar Lake. The trail then climbs gently above timberline to a crest on the hill with spectacular views. The overlook is reached in 4 miles, and at that point the trail sharply descends to Ruby and Pear Lakes. *The government trail ends at Mountain View Crest and it is NOT recommended to continue down to Ruby Lake.* Do not descend into the basin to the lakes unless you feel comfortable climbing back out.

Campsites are limited near the lakes and you must camp farther than 100 feet from water. Fires are not permitted in the area. The alpine meadows are full of blooming wildflowers in late July and in August. This area has excellent views and photographic possibilities. As with all high-altitude areas, storms can move in rapidly, bringing severe wind, lightning, rain, snow, or hail—at any time of the year. Plan accordingly.

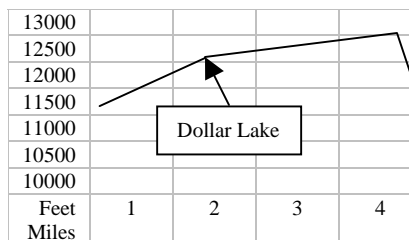
Fishing Considerations:

Ruby Lake (Jewell Lake), Pear Lake, and Emerald Lake, at 11,910, 11,579, and 11,276 feet, respectively, are rated fair for cutthroat and rainbow. Please check the fishing regulations regarding limits, allowable lures, and restrictions on certain lakes, rivers, etc.

Weminuche Wilderness Regulations:

- Group size is limited to 15 people.
- Camping is not allowed within 100 feet of any water source.
- Outfitter-guides who receive any form of compensation must obtain a special-use permit to operate on public land.
- Possession of motorized equipment and mechanized means of transport are not permitted.
- Recreational livestock are prohibited from being restrained within 100 feet of lakeshores and streams or within riparian areas.

Recommended Season
Spring ← Summer → Fall Winter



Scan of the San Juan National Forest Map

Forest Service maps and other publications are available at the Public Lands Center, in the Durango Tech Center, ½ mile west of Durango off Highway 160, or by calling (970) 247-4874.

www.sjma.org